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Tooele to begin production on M939 kits

Production began last week to fortify passenger cabs for the M939 5-ton trucks at Tooele Army Depot in Utah. The Ground Systems Industrial Enterprise, TACOM, tasked TEAD to fabricate, assemble and ship a small percentage of the vehicles in this program. The initial kits began arriving Feb. 11. By the end of August, the depot will finish installing 123 kits.

As a result of this project, TEAD will realign in-house personnel. The depot began 24 hour-a-day shifts and has been expediting production since receiving its initial supplies and materials. The depot has completed prototypes for dip sticks and tube assemblies in support of the M939 program as well.

The depot is part of the Joint Munitions Command.

Good things may soon come in small packages

Someday, thanks to nanotechnology, Soldiers may have many of the warfighting aids and protections they need built into the fibers of their uniforms.

Although not likely to be fielded anytime soon, the Army Research Laboratory is laying the groundwork by building an in-house research capability as well as working with universities and other outside labs and organizations in various areas of this relatively new and currently hot technology.

A nanometer is one-billionth of a meter, so small a million of them will reach across the head of a pin. The technology developing around it, when mature, is predicted to have a huge impact on all areas of industry and society. Working on the nanoscale level, scientists and engineers may someday be able to build things by placing every atom and molecule in a desired place. This could mean products that are built better, cleaner, safer and smarter.

Dr. Alma Wickenden, a research materials engineer, pointed out that ARL and the Natick Soldier Center are working to incorporate new types of conductive and semiconductive nanofibers into nano- and micro-scale sensors for electronic detection of chemical and biological agents.

"The intention is that these sensors could be woven into a uniform that serves as a sensor platform. If the sensors detect a chemical or biological agent, the conductive fibers help transmit that information to an outside station so the information can be passed on," she explained. This type of sensor could also be used with unmanned flying vehicles to explore chemical clouds for toxic substances, she added.

CERDEC bridging gap between engineers, scientists and Warfighters

The Communications-Electronics Research, Development and Engineering Center's Human Resources Office has implemented a new program to assist engineers in understanding the technological needs of the Warfighter.

Human Resources Program Specialists Dwayne Davis and Addie Rogers created the Soldier Engineer Interface Initiative to expose junior engineers and scientists to a different side of the Army – the Soldier side.

"We want to give the engineers and scientists a chance to take theoretical work and see it in the real world," Rogers said. "Many times that comes with experience, but the SEI2 program can help facilitate this process."

To accomplish that, Davis and Rogers knew that they had to take recent hires out of the lab and into the field. In November, a group of seven junior engineers and scientists attended live Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) On-the-Move testing at Fort Benning, Ga., where they toured facilities, spoke to Soldiers and senior engineers, and gained hands-on experience with cutting-edge technologies in a field environment. In fact, a couple of engineers observed some of their projects being used in the test bed.

"I think that experiences like this definitely give me a better perspective on what I'm doing back in the office," said Mike Vincelli, a junior computer science specialist in the Command and Control Directorate who participated in the Benning visit. "In addition to being something that I enjoyed, it was also very educational."